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KT photo | Kelly Lafferty

READY FOR BATTLE: A snow fort sits in a front yard on Edwards Drive in Kokomo Saturday morning.

Snow hits area once again

Accumulation varied widely.

By Rob Burgess

Tribune night editor

Just days after the first major winter storm to hit central Indiana since 2010 dropped between 5 and 9 inches of snow on the Kokomo area, another chilly blast once again blanketed the region.

“An area of low pressure moved across the Tennessee Valley and brought another round of snow to central Indiana [Friday evening] and the early morning hours of [Saturday],” according to a press release issued by the National Weather Service Saturday. “Snowfall amounts ranged from around an inch to over 6 inches.”

In a phone interview Saturday, Tara Dudzik, meteorologist with the NWS in Indianapolis, said while the two storms came within about 48 hours of one another, there were major dissimilarities.

“This storm had a much different track,” she said. “It had more of southern route. The previous storm hit central Indiana more directly. The big difference is that there was no wind with this storm. The last one had wind

gusts of 40 mph, creating the blizzard-like conditions.”

Dudzik said that reports from Tipton at 7 a.m. Saturday indicated 4.8 inches of new snowfall, while Kokomo sustained around 2 inches by the same time.

“It was a very narrow band,” she said. “Some places saw a lot, others didn’t get quite as much.”

Dudzik said this week’s pair of storms combined to shatter last year’s snowfall totals.

“There is no comparison [to last year],” she said. “I’m not sure we had any [snow] this time last year. We had 9 inches for all of last year. We had 9 inches with this last storm alone.”

Dudzik said 2011 was the victim of El Niño, which meant less precipitation for Indiana.

“We’re not under El Niño this year,” she said. “Basically, across the Midwest it results in a dryer winter. Right now we’re in a neutral pattern.”

This weekend’s accumulation caused problems throughout the Hoosier State. According to the scanner, US-31 southbound south of IN-26 was

backed up Saturday afternoon after a recreational vehicle slid off the road.

A representative for the Indiana State Police said Saturday there had been a number of cars glide off the roadway in Tipton and Howard counties, but no major accidents had been reported.

“If it’s a slide-off, there’s no crash, so there’s no report,” said the representative. “Kokomo and Tipton have been pretty quiet. In Grant County it’s getting pretty slick.”

Other motorists weren’t quite so fortunate. According to an ISP press release, at approximately 4:18 a.m. Saturday, six vehicles collided on I-65 northbound near the 259.9 mile marker at the Merrillville exit after one vehicle “spun out on the icy roads,” sending four to the hospital.

Dudzik said while the most recent storm system was “pretty much done” with only “flurries on the backside,” New Year’s Eve and New Year’s Day could bring more trouble.

“There is a chance for snow Monday into Tuesday,” she said. “Around 2 inches [of snow are] possible.”

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